

The University of San Francisco

## USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center

---

Master's Theses

Theses, Dissertations, Capstones and Projects

---

Spring 5-27-2020

### Supporting Our Troops in Higher Education: Veteran Admissions Training Program

Steven Delgado  
sd\_408@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.usfca.edu/thes>



Part of the [Academic Advising Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#), [Educational Leadership Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Education Law Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Delgado, Steven, "Supporting Our Troops in Higher Education: Veteran Admissions Training Program" (2020). *Master's Theses*. 1327.

<https://repository.usfca.edu/thes/1327>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, Capstones and Projects at USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. For more information, please contact [repository@usfca.edu](mailto:repository@usfca.edu).

# VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

Supporting Our Troops in Higher Education: Veteran Admissions Training Program

A Thesis Project for EDOL 655  
Presented to the Faculty of the School of Education of the  
University of San Francisco

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS  
in  
Organization and Leadership

By  
Steven Delgado  
July 20, 2020

VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

This project, written by  
Steven Delgado  
University of San Francisco  
July 20, 2020

under the guidance of the project committee,  
and approved by all its members,  
has been accepted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS  
In  
Organization and Leadership

---

(Instructor)

---

(Faculty Advisor)

---

(Date)

# VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables.....	v
Chapter I	
Introduction.....	6
Purpose of the Project.....	6
Statement of the Problem.....	7
Rationale.....	8
Project Location and Duration.....	10
Participants.....	11
Objectives.....	11
Definition of Terms.....	12
Chapter II – Literature Review	
Abstract.....	13
Benefits History.....	13
Veteran Student Policies in the CSU System.....	14
Transition.....	16
Difficulties in Education.....	18
Overcoming Adversity.....	19
Chapter III – Activities of the Project	
Description of the Project.....	20
Objectives.....	20
Policies within the CSU.....	21

# VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

Communication with Veterans.....	21
Evaluation Process.....	22
Universal Training Manual.....	22
Materials.....	23
Chapter IV – Conclusion, Recommendations, and Implications	
Conclusions.....	24
Recommendations.....	25
Implications.....	26
Reflection.....	26
Leadership Management Strengths.....	27
Areas for Growth.....	27
Appendices.....	28
References.....	30

VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

List of Tables

<i>Description</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Project Outline.....	12
2. Learning Objectives.....	23

# VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

The veteran population has endured many struggles throughout their time serving the U.S. As they transition from military life to civilian life, many choose to pursue an education. Through undergoing this transition, it can be difficult to navigate and understand the process it takes to adapt. The overall support for veteran students is being questioned due to the lack of understanding and support from educational institutions (Norman et al., 2015). Research shows veteran students come from different life experiences than non-military students such as: PTSD, financial burden, isolation, depression, maintaining employment, and family troubles (Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). All these conditions are some of the most common side effects of serving and can be remediated with the proper resources on campuses. The importance in supporting this diverse population on campus would create a positive and friendly learning environment that would grant a smoother transition on campus (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). Ultimately, the goal of many institutions should be to cater to this population with the goal of reaching a “veteran-friendly” institution that guides veteran students to complete their educational journey with a fair advantage (Dillard & Yu, 2016). This project is not going to investigate the whole educational system, but rather explore the implementation of a new training program to provide a clearer admission process for veteran students at California State University, East Bay.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to create a training manual to highlight the steps to process a veteran application through admissions. Improving and building training procedures in the Admissions Department at Cal State East Bay.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### **Statement of the Problem**

The Veteran Admission Counselor position at Cal State East Bay is tasked to evaluate and process military records, military credits, and any secondary institutions' transcripts. In order to properly serve the veteran student population the counselor that is assigned to handle these administrative tasks needs to go through a training period to understand the important steps that are required, so that these files are moved forward without any complications and possibly affect the veteran students' experience transitioning. The veteran population is entering the institution with unresolved issues (PTSD, financial burdens, or disabilities) and we need to understand this underrepresented population better by forming a healthier relationship because it supports trust within the educational system. Maintaining a "veteran-friendly" campus so that all departments at Cal State East Bay system can understand that veteran applicants are coming from a background with directions and order, which require more patience and guidance as they enter new phases.

There were no previous organizational methods (communications, coding, examining military credits, and connecting with veterans) that were adequately translated to outline the policies/processes that would allow a counselor to understand the protocol for a smoother transition for these veteran students. This training manual would allow a clear guide to maintain a web of support to our veteran students. Since the admissions counselors are the first to handle their records, or answer any concerns regarding their admission, they should be highly trained and supportive through this new stage of transition.

The admissions process for veteran applicants at Cal State East Bay was unclear and lacked a "flow" of steps that allowed an efficient system for a veteran counselor. When transitioning to this role, there was no clear understanding on how to navigate meticulous tasks



## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

and it was a “learn as you go” or “find your way of doing things” approach to how administrative duties were conducted. The complexity and various steps of veteran admissions made me think of how beneficial it would be to create a training manual of all the material I learned and have experienced/implemented from processing veteran students through past trials/tribulations. This would include working collaboratively with other departments to maintain a positive relationship so that veteran students are ensured proper support throughout their time at Cal State East Bay. My hope would be to reach a larger audience to address this miscommunication and interruption in the flow of their veteran process. Focusing on implementing a proper and formal training session for any future counselors so that this policy is ingrained at this CSU over an extended period.

### **Rationale**

This problem was chosen because of a large disconnect in the flow of the admissions process toward the veteran students’ applicants. Veteran students are transitioning into the educational system with trauma and distrust. There needs to be a clear admission protocol in the department so that veteran students may have reduced stress as they prepare mentally for the challenges of transitioning to a new environment. The admissions counselor sets the foundation because they are the first to encounter the veteran student’s educational and military career records which are often used during the application review. If any questions arise, then the admissions counselor will take initiative and direct them to other departments if needed. These issues can be solved with proper instruction and training for the future counselors at this institution. These changes would create a positive impact in the department and determine progression in how the staff surrounding the department set a structure in the future.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

This is something that could be impactful as training is the first initiative in conducting a change. Having this problem solved will allow a clearer understanding of the policies and procedures of managing veteran files. The information will be researched and verified for counselors to reference so that they are able to follow the detailed steps on how to input the required information so that they are in the admitted stage.

I want to design a training manual that transcribes key information needed to process and manage their files so that they are fully admissible. My current role on the Cal State East Bay campus is to work as the liaison for any veteran applicants. I evaluate, code, input, and store all their records. I wish to highlight all tasks so that a counselor can easily navigate through the appropriate channels to move their files forward so that they are prepared for the start of their term.

The project will develop a clear walkthrough of all the steps used to process veteran students with in-depth charts and images on what is expected of the veteran admissions counselor:

1. Admission Flow
2. Admission Eligibility
3. CSU policies on Veteran Students
4. Transcripts/Evaluation Process
5. ASAR Form/Coding
6. Navigating and understanding Peoplesoft
7. Posting Military Credit and Records (DD214)
8. Web Sources for Evaluations
9. Communication
10. FAQ's

This exercise will test my problem-solving, facilitation, research, designing, and critical thinking skills to clearly demonstrate how to correctly process a veteran file through every scenario that I have experienced. The veteran population is important to our campus because

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

they offer unique perspectives/insight about their experience translating it into the learning environment. As a veteran myself, I want to give back a structured process to this institution so that future counselors understand/support the veterans entering our institution. I believe that with proper training, admissions counselors can feel prepared to effectively serve veteran students. By implementing a clear application process, veterans can feel taken care of and encouraged. They should feel comfortable knowing that our institution will take care of them as they battled many obstacles protecting our freedom.

### **Project Location and Duration**

The project will be designed at California State University, East Bay. CSU East Bay is located in Hayward, California. East Bay is in Alameda County which serves various major California cities like Oakland, Berkeley, San Leandro, and Pleasanton. This institution is known to serve a diverse student body from various backgrounds. I would conduct my project in my place of work, which is the admissions office. The training structure needs to be improved upon so that current policies and procedures with updated and accurate information surrounding veteran applicants is understood by the trainees.

The duration of the project is dependent on the outline of the entire process of veteran admission counselors' role. Since this project is going to reflect the thorough step-by-step procedure to manage veteran files, especially when all files are complex circumstances, and no information is withheld, it should take the total length of this course (3-4 months). The step-by-step training manual will be thorough and heavily researched to ensure quality standards and accuracy of policies. I will conduct research and provide expert advice on the admissions process to clearly illustrate my findings in the training manual.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### **Participants**

I would design and create a training manual with all the administrative tasks that a transfer admissions counselor would manage. This will be composed of common areas that require clarity. I will be passing this along the admissions office leadership as a recommendation to implement a structured training session, or in the case of the position being vacant and requiring additional support from someone unfamiliar with handling military careers and transcripts.

### **Objectives**

The training manual would be a detailed walk-through of all the tasks that I have encountered in my role as a veteran admissions counselor. The step-by-step guide would allow the counselor to learn the material and understand it at a basic/entry level. I want to explain and define many of the terms that admissions encounter in their role as well as thoroughly go in-depth what military documents are required, approved, and how long the process would take. The project length would vary, but with the correct tools and research, it is estimated to be a full 3-4 months. The training manual will be presented along with the project details, as well as the contents related to any research/feedback I was given.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

What is to be done?	• Design and Create a Veteran Admissions Training Manual
Who is to do it?	• The Transfer & Veteran Admissions Counselor
When will it be completed?	• Approximately 3 months (full length of the course)
Where will it be completed?	• California State University, East Bay
What evidence is acceptable to conclude that the objective has been carried out?	• The evidence of a training manual to conclude the project

Table 1: Project Outline

### Definition of Terms

Admissions - The process or fact of entering or being allowed to enter a place, organization, or institution

Veteran Student - Service member of the armed forces.

Appeals - To make a request or decision

California State University East Bay - An institution that is part of the CSU system. Located in Hayward, CA.

PTSD - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Transition - Undergo a process or change

Application - A formal request to enter or continue a process

Records - A thing constituting a piece of evidence about the past

Articulation - One institution matches its courses or requirements to course work completed at another institution.

CSU System - California State University System

## **Chapter II**

### **Literature Review**

#### **Abstract**

The overall literature of veteran students' in higher education and supportive programs/services through academic mentoring/coaching remains challenging to address on campuses (Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). Campuses have a difficult time creating a friendly safe-space for these veterans entering education (Brown, & Gross, 2011) because of their difficult time transitioning with mental, physical and emotional trauma from their time in the military (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). A common method to help support their success in higher education is through academic support (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). This can lead to a higher retention and graduation rates for the veteran community (Parks, Walker, & Smith, 2015).

#### **Benefits History**

After World War II there was an expanded role in education to support veterans as they came home to a fragile job market and flooded economy (Cunningham, 2012). The original G.I. bill was created for veterans to gain an education and learn valuable job skills to transition into civilian life (Angrist, 1993). This supported the full amount of cost of their education and eventually added enrollment by double enrollment (Cunningham, 2012). Cunningham explains (2012) that returning veterans took advantage of the new program and signed up for classes in record numbers, almost doubling university enrollment. Enrollment in higher education went from 1.6 million, with 88,000 being veterans in 1945, to 2.3 million, with 1.15 million having served during the war (pg. 15).

After a few decades of benefits, education continued to increase in cost, and it was hard to afford for many veterans. This pushed for a new policy in the 1980's to re-alter the G.I. benefits that were named post-Korean G.I. bill (Vietnam veterans, who served between August

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

1964 and May 1975, and veterans of the early AVF period, who served from May 1975 to September 1980) and the Veteran Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) (after 1976) that contributed monthly stipends and allowances to assist in education (Angrist, 1993). The VEAP took over as the main benefit for many veterans as the military transitioned into a new program. This allowed veterans to make monthly contributions toward their education, which had a negative impact on recruiting and retention (Angrist, 1993).

After some time, the emergence of the Post 9-11 G.I. bill was introduced, which was the most significant increase in education benefits for military members (O'Herrin, 2011). This funded over two million service members expenses in education who served during 2011 (O'Herrin, 2011). Many coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan were able to fully fund their education with monthly stipends and allowances, and in 2010 the support expanded to National Guard and Reserve veterans (O'Herrin, 2011). Today, there are various resource opportunities for veterans ranging from education expenses, housing, and scholarships. The expansion in services provides support to complete their education as they move forward in the civilian world - with federal aid being funded every year the number of military veterans taking advantage of post-911 educational benefits has increased significantly, from 34,393 in 2009 to 790,090 in 2016 (Natal. G, Atwood. T., 2018).

### **Veteran Student Policies in the CSU System**

Veteran students are continuing to enter the CSU system and are unaware of the flexibility and credit that can go toward their degree (Credit for Prior Learning, n.d.). These credits are explained and defined under American Council on Education (ACE) (Military Guide, n.d.) Veteran students have numerous benefits including, but not limited to: G.I. Bill, Montgomery, Tuition Assistance, Post-911 G.I. Bill, with all of them ranging in percentages in

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

allowances and stipends (California Department of Veteran Affairs, 2019, pg. 125-134) and can support them through their educational goals. The CSU system requires DD-214 and encouraged to submit their JST (Joint Services Transcript), Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) transcripts, and any examination credits earned (CLEP, DSST, and AP) so that they are prepared for review of all coursework and service when transferring (Credit for Prior Learning, n.d.).

There are policies that support veterans and would allow them priority admissions eligibility, and early admission if they do not meet the 60 semester, or 90 quarter units, which is protected under Article 5 (Department of Veteran Affairs, Amendments to Title 5 Regarding Admission of Veterans; ASA-2017-11). Along with these benefits, veterans can be granted credit toward certain general education (GE) requirements such as elective units in lieu of courses like physical education (Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D., 2012), freeing up space in their course schedule to prioritize other GE requirements. Along with all these benefits there are some that are skeptical about policy limitations.

According to Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D. (2012) they discuss some concerns regarding systematic alterations to certain policies. Some academic professionals are weary of the credit granted by some GE areas (Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D., 2012). The gray area in the policy is that there is no clear distinction of how the credits are being used and to what extent. The explanation that Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D. (2012) used was:

“Military credit” can be thought of as a category of transfer credit to California community colleges and the California State Universities. In the case of military students, “military credit” can include military training and coursework and military experience. However, the greater difficulty lies in determining whether or



## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

not that credit applies to unit requirements, general education or graduation requirements, or major and major preparation requirements.”

Another concern mentioned by Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D. (2012) is that military courses should fulfill various general education requirements rather than awarding multiple elective units (physical education). The experience that veterans gain from their service should be essential and advanced levels of learning – using real world experience to progress. The example Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D. (2012) used in the article was:

“According to the ACE recommendations, a military recruiter could potentially receive credit for a marketing course and a communications course based on the student’s military coursework and occupational experience. However, the marketing and communications content learned in the military may not be comparable to content learned via college-level academic courses in these areas. Clearing the college course requirements may therefore disadvantage the student later when taking more advanced coursework in the field or in cases where the course is cleared by the CCC for the associate degree major requirement but the same course is not cleared by the student’s university for the bachelor’s degree.”

There are no clear distinctions in the policy to provide these services to the veterans entering the CSU system. However, there are representatives in each of the CSU’s that continue to expand to support veterans through events, organizations, and success centers (Troops to college, n.d.)

### **Transition**

Understanding a veteran student’s transition from military to education journey can be beneficial for all higher education practitioners. Research shows veteran students come from different life experiences than non-military students and can suffer from traumatic life events

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

such as: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), financial burden, isolation, depression, maintaining employment, and family troubles (Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). These experiences can create unique obstacles for a veteran student's success in classes. Looking closely, veteran students come with mental and emotional conditions from their time in the military. Some veteran students also have difficulty funding their education through the G.I. bill as not all veteran students receive the same amount to cover tuition. Some other factors include low veteran affairs staff, culture shock while attending, and the lack of enrollment support (Cunningham, 2012). These are some of the main problems for some veterans entering education after their service. Many veteran students struggle with mental and social issues from their experiences and labor to understand the structure and culture of school (Cunningham, 2012).

On the other hand, veteran students also have unique skills to offer educational institutions because of their military experience. Considering a veteran student's battles and tribulations from their time in service is likely to aid educational institutions in creating improved resources that support their needs. The mental and emotional obstacles that service members go through can create difficulties when transitioning into education but with the right model and budget, it seems there are ways to make their time on campus more comfortable. Beginning with higher education, a solid infrastructure needs to be achieved to increase veteran success. The positions in education need to be filled with faculty/staff that have experience working with veteran students, so that they may get people that are knowledgeable about services. Programs and services like peer mentoring, advising, technological support, and financial aid options are all geared toward creating the smoothest transition possible (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017).

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

Many institutions provide safe-spaces and a welcoming campus environment but neglect to provide adequate coaching and mentoring to veteran students which should be spotlighted as it often improves the quality of their educational journey (Dillard, & Yu, 2016). Research supports the idea that many factors contribute to the quality of an education and some of those factors include the availability of a mentor and supportive environment for veteran students, not advising alone.

### **Difficulties in Education**

The educational system misunderstands veteran students and misconstrues their needs because they treat the needs of this population similarly to that of non-military students. However, faculty and staff should develop more diversity training or academic advisors that play the role of academic coaches or mentors. Keeping the staff and faculty aware of a veteran student's safe spaces is important. Also, creating an organization and having workshops/meetings to teach them to be leading professionals in the civilian workforce (Dillard, & Yu, 2016). Research studies found that many of the veteran students stated they felt isolated and unsupported by their facilitators while other populations received guidance and assistance throughout the process. Some responses stressed school structure, policy, and facilitators features in the classroom as concerns. (Norman, et al., 2015). The responses ranged from ineffective learning support to feeling vulnerable to the learning environment surrounding them. Higher education leaders may want to investigate innovative methods to use to connect with veteran students because they bring an interesting experience to their campus. Creating an equal opportunity at learning and being comfortable determines their success moving toward completing their educational goals.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### **Overcoming Adversity**

An overall variety of supportive services in education can benefit many student groups, but more importantly it proves diversity is at the forefront of an institution's priorities. However, hosting military students on college campuses is becoming harder to achieve due to the lack of effective services for them. The continuation of research and awareness will help to understand this population better (Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). Moreover, the upside of developing and creating new student services would be a milestone for other organizations and would foster growth for all students enrolling, not limiting veteran students.

Veteran students coming from adversity and different backgrounds can contribute to a unique experience for other students on campus (Norman, et al., 2015, pg. 709). Moreover, veteran students benefit from experiencing the inclusive and diverse learning that happens in the classroom without feeling apart from their community/peers. The goal of the education sector should be to promote the highest service to veterans so that they are not feeling excluded from other students. Maintaining the same respect for those who have served builds morale and ethical character to the learning environment. Leadership should focus on the importance of helping these students feel validated because of their sacrifice and the unique perspective they can bring to education (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). Life experiences are the best to share among your peers because it brings a realistic lens to the rest of the scholars in the learning environment.

## **Chapter III**

### **Activities of the Project**

The goal of the project is to create and design a training manual for admissions counselors that may be required to take on the additional role of a veteran admissions. Focusing on the admissions steps, policies, and communication there is a flow they may reference as they manage veteran applicants' files with a consistent basis. The institutional changes and alterations are constant within education, but the training structure should remain the same. Through proper guidance and understanding from my experience in the role, I am able to share the materials, content, and steps that would be useful to any counselor that would like to process veterans with a better understanding of the policies and regulations that are granted to them.

### **Description of the Project**

Transitioning into my role as a veteran admissions counselor, I didn't have a training manual to follow and the role was expressed to me that it could be conducted with the freedom of having my own style to process the veteran applicants. The person that held the role temporarily before I started as a Transfer Admissions Counselor was Aira H. (transfer credit evaluator), who trained me in the Peoplesoft application of coding (See Appendix A) and some of the policies she had to learn in the role (through communicating with the veteran department and appeals). She was detailed in what units CSU East Bay offers veterans and what exceptions they are given (See Appendix B). After teaching me some of these policies I was on my own to implement these with my own learning style.

### **Objectives**

The learning outcomes are based on research, practice, and personal experience. These objectives are focused on some of the highlighted outcomes that are required when learning

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

about the veteran student population. These key items are useful tools to guide the trainee in maintaining the flow of an organized system.

My goal is to present the institution with some of the insight of a guided training manual that provides these learning objectives (4) so that it is easily accessible to the department and made available to future counselors for efficient and reliable processing.

### **Policies within the CSU**

Highlighting the policies of veteran application processing within the CSU was one of the more important pieces to the manual. This reflects some of the federal regulations and state granted exceptions that veterans are given as they apply to a CSU (Department of Veteran Affairs, Amendments to Title 5 Regarding Admission of Veterans; ASA-2017-11).

Through extensive research during the first week of February, I wanted to gather information that would allow a clearer understanding of the guidelines that we as admissions counselors are working toward with this population. The training manual focuses on the amendments, exceptions, and procedures of these legal understandings. Proceeding forward, counselors can reference state orders and executive decisions.

### **Communication with Veterans**

The training manual can present examples of what to expect when processing their applications. Some questions that should be answered and reminders of what part of the process their application is in (status). I compiled a list of basic responses and common questions from old emails and voicemails from my communications with veteran students and included them in the training manual as examples for how to inform them on certain admissions processes. As a veteran myself, it was important to include this in the training manual as I often found that veterans were having difficulty finding reliable information on their status. The counselors can

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

use these templates to communicate with the veterans or use them as the foundation to set a positive experience for a population unfamiliar with admissions steps.

### **Evaluation Process**

The detailed steps to evaluate and process a veteran's students file requires various programs, websites, and software's at one time. They are all listed to use as a guide to process these applications with a step-by-step tool that includes, but is not limited to posting credits, appeal process, and requirements that we look for as transfer admissions counselors.

By creating this training manual and through learning the intricacies of admissions, the overall message of making this a training and development one stop shop helped to complement a well-rounded insight of veteran admissions. I compiled everything that I was taught, and what I learned on my own, to help future counselors learn this process quickly and easily. Creating this training manual brought more information to the surface as a reminder that all aspects of evaluating, coding, and posting should be balanced even when handling the veteran population.

### **Universal Training Manual**

All these tools are useful and designed to make the process as well-rounded and balanced as possible. Those counselors that are not assigned to the veteran population can view this manual as a walkthrough if they are unaccustomed to processing them. I understand not all counselors will need to process veteran files however, there is a need for better understanding and training by which this manual acts as an essential tool for efficient processing. I wanted all admissions counselors to understand the material because it would make the department stronger if they understood what connecting with veterans entails. At the same time, I wanted to remove intimidation as a reason not to process veteran files so that the counselors may view this and feel confident in the steps it takes to manage veteran files. By creating and designing this training

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

manual as user friendly as possible, I hope to bring the entire department together and improve the culture of learning.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Understanding of Veteran Student Policies within CSU</b>	<b>Outline of the flow (application, evaluation, military credit, appeals)</b>	<b>Veteran Next Steps</b>
<b>LO 1: The Training Manual highlights the policies that veteran students are benefited within the CSU system</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>LO 2: The Training Manual instructs how to effectively communicate with veteran applicants and notify of their status in the process</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>LO 3: The Training Manual illustrates the proper applications and sites to navigate and assist veteran applicants</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>LO 4: Counselors not familiar with veteran processing can easily reference this as a tool to move forward</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

*Table 2: Learning Objectives*

### Materials

The materials I am presenting is a training manual. The materials involved in this project are teaching tools that I learned from/how I learned (See Appendix A & B), and some of the forms I gathered from research that include titles and amendments pertaining to the veteran



## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

students in the CSU system (Department of Veteran Affairs, Amendments to Title 5 Regarding Admission of Veterans; ASA-2017-11).

### **Chapter IV**

#### **Conclusion, Recommendations, and Implications**

In my time creating, designing, and applying this project, my overall goal is to adapt new training methods in the admissions department. By involving all the topics, material, and newly researched information this admissions process will be more organized, accurate, and well-rounded to better provide services to the veteran population. Closing the gap of the veteran population and transitioning needs can be a positive step forward as the training continues to improve (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). The new process will create a bridge of information that includes other departments in the direction of supporting the veterans on campus. Presenting this training manual will allow these counselors to answer many of their questions as well as maintain an understanding of how veterans are underrepresented at various institutions. The veterans at Cal State East Bay will be better served and will be able to focus on the learning environment they are transitioning into.

The goal of providing more resources to the training structure in admissions is needed, because policies are always changing or there are new staff members being taught various ways. My time working for the admissions department, I noticed that there was a communication and organizational need regarding the veteran population on campus. I wanted to positively change structure and make a manual that included everything that I know as a veteran, transfer, and alum of Cal State East Bay. I included all areas that I think needed improvement and an in-depth explanation. In hopes of covering these topics and experiences in the manual, this will effectively

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

promote a progressive learning approach for all new staff members and possibly implements positive change in various departments.

As veterans begin to transition into education, it is essential for counselors to undergo proper training in the admissions process because of the sensitive and important documents (military forms/transcripts) that counselors encounter to process veteran files. Once a file is reviewed by admissions, admissions does not manage that file again; it moves on to the next department. Ensuring accurate and complete coursework review from the start will help the student in the long run as their file moves forward to the registrar.

### **Recommendations**

Due to the time constraints of working full-time and experiencing this current pandemic (COVID-19) it was difficult to complete this project in a timely manner. The scope of the project was limited due to these circumstances; however, this project will be a successful addition to our current admissions counselor training. Understanding of the admissions process from the CSU system can be assessed in a future study to better understand what the big picture looks like when processing transfer students from various populations. The veteran population was underrepresented in our system, so I focused on improving this system by gathering data and information to implement in our training structure. In future studies I believe researchers should focus on Cal State East Bay veteran students by interviewing them to better understand the support they are given. I would recommend interviews and surveys to build upon areas of support. Moreover, studying the veteran department at Cal State East Bay and assessing their programs and services provided to students will help determine strengths and weaknesses to improve. All these perspectives would allow a better grasp on areas that require improvement within the institution and create a supportive environment based on veteran recommendations.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### **Implications**

Through this project and answering the need for better training, this manual will be a start to a more thorough process that is a deep-rooted issue among various departments on campus. With the initiative of promoting a “veteran-friendly” community within the campus, it will support and attract veterans (Adams, Lee, & Holden, 2017). The appeal of coming into the institution and not stressing about the academic life in a time where they should be reflecting and preparing on the educational journey ahead is important (Taylor, Parks, & Edwards, 2016). As the next couple years are going to be challenging and rigorous, they will receive the support from admissions in getting the head start they deserve. Overall, they can get a sense of trust from our system to support them through the admissions process with this new method being added within the department.

### **Reflection**

This project has been a great experience. This has opened my eyes to some of the challenges these veterans face in their everyday lives. As an alum and veteran from Cal State East Bay, I did not receive that sense of pride and encouragement from our system. The time reflecting on this study answered some of the questions I had as a veteran advocate and supporter; I found that staff training on managing veteran files needed to be revised. Now, I can share that information with counselors so that students are getting the services they are entitled to. All these steps are in efforts of addressing a larger initiative at Cal State East Bay. Through the many struggles they faced in their time of service, they now can be a step closer to reaching their educational goals.

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### **Leadership Management Strengths**

This project taught me how to effectively create and design a training program. In the manual it includes some of the work that I have done in the past year as a veteran admissions counselor. Leading this project, I noticed that there were many leadership qualities that I carried. Some of the qualities were compiling information effectively and connecting them to create a learning tool. I applied my organizational and research skills to highlight some of the key steps to properly process the veteran population while adding federal policies and guidelines. The information is clearly listed and thoroughly explained with a step-by-step guide to demonstrate the importance of problem solving and critical thinking when aiming to improve productivity and understanding among this underrepresented population on campus.

### **Areas for Growth**

Throughout the process, there are other departments that work to support veteran students. In a future study, it would be interesting to collaborate with various departments so that we can highlight the different challenges faced within each department and measure how veterans are feeling after admissions. As a leader, it is important to view the whole picture and determine where the disconnect is on campus and how to improve it. Shadowing successful training programs at partner CSU's would be an area of growth as we are all working to close the veteran gap across the state/country. Looking forward, plenty of changes can be made to improve the way the entire system functions. Even though the various departments are responsible for certain tasks, we can all work together to bring new ideas to the surface and increase efficiency. This impact on training and development toward staff procedures holistically is supporting hundreds of veteran applicants on a yearly basis and will continue to improve as we all understand this population better.

# VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

## Appendix A. Training Instruction Sheet used to train veteran admissions (Pt.1)

AIRA

External Org ID: C210015687 Military Credit

*External Course Defaults*

Data Number: [ ] External Career: Undergrad Apply Defaults

Data Source: Self-Rpted Term Type: [ ]

Acad Level: Unknown Begin Date: [ ]

Institution: HW001 CSUEB End Date: [ ]

Course Type: Course Course Level: [ ]

Unit Type: [ ] Units Taken: [ ]

Grading Scheme: UGRD Grd Grading Basis: TRN Transfer

---

*External Courses*

Grades Timeframe Details Transfer Credit/ Comments

Course Seq	External Term	Term Year	*School Subject	*Course Nbr	*Course Name
1	SEP	2015	DD	214	Basic Recruit Training

Data Source: School

---

*Transfer Credit Term*

Articulation Term: 2189 Admit term Fall 2018 Posted CSU Adjust

*Equivalency Details*

Group	Status	External Term	External Subject/ Catalog Nbr	Units Taken	Grade Input	Equivalent Subject/ Catlg Nbr	Units Accepted	Grade Basis	Grade	Repeat Code	Incl in FA WI
1	Posted	2015 09	DD 214	6.00	CR	KIN 910	3.000	TRN	CR		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
						ELEC 910	3.000	TRN	CR		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

POSTING MILITARY CREDIT FOR DD-214 *NOT required to be reported. check w/ student first.*

- You will usually need to do the one-line data entry (see above).
- Code the 3.0 semester units of credit for KIN 910 to clear E.
- For students with a quarter GE pattern, the student receives 9.0 quarter units. The split is KIN 9100 – 4 units, which clears E and F, and ELEC 9100 – 5.0 elective units.
- Veteran students are not required to submit their DD-214 for academic credit.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF THE AIR FORCE (PS School Code C30003717) *look like a regular transcript*

- Sometimes referred to as "Air U"
- Since this is an accredited post-secondary institution, these units must be posted.
- Usually it only clears Area E (or E/F for quarter students). The student needs to contact their major department for any coursework that may clear major requirements. For example, a nursing student who was a medic "might" be able to get credit for certain military training.

JOINT SERVICES TRANSCRIPT (JST) *NOT required to be reported. check w/ student first.*

- Gets similar credit as DD-214 to clear Area E. Use either DD-214 or JST, not both.

VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

Appendix B. Training Instruction Sheet used to train veteran admissions (Pt.2)

48517 > Semester  
 A.C. > LDIV  
 48517 > UDIV

Page 1 of 11

JOINT SERVICES  
 TRANSCRIPT



\*\*OFFICIAL\*\*

Name: [REDACTED]  
 SSN: [REDACTED]  
 Rank: Intelligence Specialist, Third Class (E4)  
 Status: Separated

Transcript Sent To:  
 California State University  
 Office of Admissions  
 25800 Carlos Bee Boulevard  
 Hayward, CA 94542

Military Courses

Military Course ID	ACE Identifier Course Title Location-Description-Credit Areas	Dates Taken	ACE Credit Recommendation	Level
A-950-0001	<p><u>course #</u>                      NV-2202-0165 V03                      Recruit Training:</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of general military and Navy protocol, first aid, personal health, safety, basic swimming, water survival skills, physical fitness, and fire fighting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Community Health</li> <li>Personal Conditioning</li> </ul> (10/06)(10/06)	30-MAR-2007 to 30-MAY-2007	1 SH 1 SH	L L L L
I-242-0010	<p>NV-1511-0017 V04                      Intelligence Specialist Class "A" (IS "A");                      Navy and Marine Corps Intelligence Training Center, Dam Neck                      Virginia Beach, VA</p> <p>Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to analyze intelligence reports; read and interpret national data, aerial photography, maps and charts; perform basic data processing; prepare, conduct and write oral presentations and reports; assess and gather intelligence and learn basic world geography.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map Reading</li> <li>National Security</li> <li>Psychology</li> <li>Technical Communications</li> <li>World Geography</li> </ul> (12/07)(12/07)	04-JUN-2007 to 31-AUG-2007	2 SH 2 SH 1 SH 1 SH 1 SH	L L L L L
A-243-0050	<p>NV-1408-0062 V01                      Expeditionary Ground Intelligence Analyst:</p>	07-MAR-2008		

\*\* OFFICIAL COPY \*\* PROTECTED BY FERPA \*\*

05/19/2018

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

### References

Adams, P., Lee, H. S., & Holden, B. (2017). A needs assessment for developing a web-based social support program for student veterans. *Journal of Military & Veterans' Health*, 25(3), 23-29.

Brown, P. A., & Gross, C. (2011). Serving those who have served--managing veteran and military student best practices. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 59(1), 45-49.

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. (n.d.). Retrieved from

<https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Educational-Services-and-Support/Student-Service/What-we-do/Veterans-Education-and-Transition-Services>

California Department of Veteran Affairs. (2019). *California veterans resource book* (8th ed.).

California Department of Veteran Affairs.

[https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/Veteran\\_%20Resource\\_%20Book.pdf](https://www.calvet.ca.gov/VetServices/Documents/Veteran_%20Resource_%20Book.pdf)

Callahan, R., & Jarrat, D. (2014). Helping student service members and veterans succeed.

*Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 46(2), 36-41.

Credit for Prior Learning. Retrieved from [https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-](https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/troops-to-college/applying-to-the-csu/Pages/credit-for-prior-learning.aspx)

[services/troops-to-college/applying-to-the-csu/Pages/credit-for-prior-learning.aspx](https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/troops-to-college/applying-to-the-csu/Pages/credit-for-prior-learning.aspx)

Cunningham, J. (2012). Veterans' post-secondary education: Keeping the promise to those who

serve. *Hinckley Journal of Politics*, 13, 14-20.

Dillard, R. J., & Yu, H. H. (2016). Best practices in student veteran education: Making a

"veteran-friendly" institution. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 64(3), 181-186.

Kawaguchi, L., & Short, D. (2012, December). *Issues regarding academic credit for veterans*

*and military service members: Doing what is best for students*. Retrieved from

## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

<https://www.asccc.org/content/issues-regarding-academic-credit-veterans-and-military-service-members-doing-what-best>

Keillor, J. B. (2009). Veterans at the gates: exploring the new GI bill and its transformative possibilities. *Washington University Law Review*, 87(1), 175–201.

[https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1080&context=law\\_lawreview](https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1080&context=law_lawreview)

Military Guide Online. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.acenet.edu/Programs-Services/Pages/Credit-Transcripts/military-guide-online.aspx>

Natal, G., & Atwood, T. (2018). Cover me, I'm going in: exploring the needs of student veterans. *College & Undergraduate Libraries*, 25(4), 335–349.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10691316.2018.1514285>

Norman, S. B., Rosen, J., Himmerich, S., Myers, U. S., Davis, B., Browne, K. C., & Piland, N. (2015). Student veteran perceptions of facilitators and barriers to achieving academic goals. *Journal of Rehabilitation Research & Development*, 52(6), 701-712.

O'Herrin, E. (2011). Enhancing veteran success in higher education. *Peer Review*, 13(1).

Parks, R., Walker, E., & Smith, C. (2015). Exploring the challenges of academic advising for student veterans. *College & University*, 90(4), 37–52.

Richardson, T. M., Ruckert, J. M., & Marion, J. W. (2015). Planning for veterans' success: the degree map as an advising solution. *Online Learning*, 19(1), 64-80.

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. (2019, September). *CSU admission handbook*. The California State University, Office of the Chancellor. Retrieved from <https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/Documents/Admissions-Handbook-2020-21.pdf>



## VETERAN ADMISSIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

Taylor, A., Parks, R., & Edwards, A. (2016). Challenges on the front lines: serving today's student veterans. *College and University*, 91(4), 47-60.

Thomas, M. (2017, April 20). *Viewing: Amendments to Title 5 regarding admission of veterans*. California State University. Retrieved from <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/6656914/latest/>